CSM Human Biology (Martin)
Research Paper Assignment
Due Tuesday May 8, 2007

Now that you’ve had some training in how to critically evaluate information you get from media about science, you are assigned a research project. Remember that when you examine sources you want to look for evidence of credibility in the author, evidence that the author knows what they are talking about, and evidence that good scientific method was used to achieve results. For the assignment you need to find another article about science and human biology. This time, in addition to critically evaluating it for its usefulness in reporting good science, you will do more investigation into the article’s claims.

Recall the article we examined about beta carotene. We decided we needed more information to decide if beta carotene supplements were useful in preventing eye disease or not. We also wanted more information about how beta carotene affected groups other than male doctors. We saw in the article, the names of other experts in the field who commented on the findings of the research. These people would be good to look up, find out what their research has uncovered. I recommend the website for the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM http://nccam.nih.gov/) for more information about supplements.

Whatever your topic, a wealth of information exists out there on the internet. Each time you find a website, make sure, using our critical evaluation criteria, that this is a valid source of information BEFORE you use the information from it. There are as many bad sources of information as there are good ones. You must sort those bad ones out.

Your assignment then is to find a current science article and do more research on the topic so that you can write a paper that looks at the issue from a scientific, critical standpoint. In the paper you should summarize the information you have found, evaluate the content and validity of your sources, and write your conclusion (your opinion) about the topic.

The paper must be at least one page, typed, 1.5 spaced. It is due Tuesday May 8, 2007. I would like to help with the research for your paper. You can make an appointment with me to help with your search once you have an article you like. After class on Tues and Thursdays are best for me. Good Luck and please feel free to get help from me as needed. 😊